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1 and

2 WHEREAS, by raising their grandchildren, these
3 grandparents save the state millions of dollars annually in
4 foster-care costs, provide some family stability for these
5 children and help preserve the relationship of the children to
6 their families, communities and cultures; and

7 WHEREAS, children raised by grandparents are more likely
8 to live in poverty and to have suffered trauma, abuse or
9 neglect, due to separation from their parents; and

10 WHEREAS, children being raised by grandparents often have
11 parents who suffer from substance abuse, mental illness or
12 incarceration, putting the children at high risk to follow
13 their parents' example; and

14 WHEREAS, children raised by grandparents often
15 experience a history of significant disruptions in their
16 education and may not have a legal guardian to enroll them in
17 school; and

18 WHEREAS, grandparents raising their grandchildren may lack
19 the energy, good health and financial ability of other
20 relatives who could be potential caregivers; and

21 WHEREAS, many grandparents receive little or no help from
22 the state as well as confusing and erroneous information about
23 the social services and benefits to which they may be entitled;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
25 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department, the

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1 aging and long-term services department, the children, youth
2 and families department, the department of health and the
3 public education department be requested to convene a multi-
4 agency task force to develop an interdepartmental plan to
5 assess the needs of grandchildren and grandparents living in
6 grandparent-headed households; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
8 representatives of state and local law enforcement agencies,
9 the statewide association of district court judges, the state
10 bar of New Mexico and caregivers and advocates for families and
11 children; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force identify the
13 number of children living with their grandparents and their
14 demographics and needs; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a plan
16 to ensure that grandchildren and grandparents living in
17 grandparent-headed households have access to the educational,
18 social, medical and mental health services to which they are
19 entitled; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study how
21 other states address the challenge of providing support to
22 grandparents who are in this situation; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
24 progress and legislative recommendations to the legislative
25 health and human services committee at its October 2005

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1 meeting; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
3 transmitted to the secretary of human services, the secretary
4 of aging and long-term services, the secretary of children,
5 youth and families, the secretary of health and the secretary
6 of public education.

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